Fairy

A **fairy** (also *fata*, *fay*, *fey*,[1] *fae*, *fair folk*; from *faery*, *faerie*, "realm of the *fays*") is a type of mythical being or legendary creature in European folklore (and particularly Celtic, Slavic, German, English, and French folklore), a form of spirit, often described as metaphysical, supernatural, or preternatural.

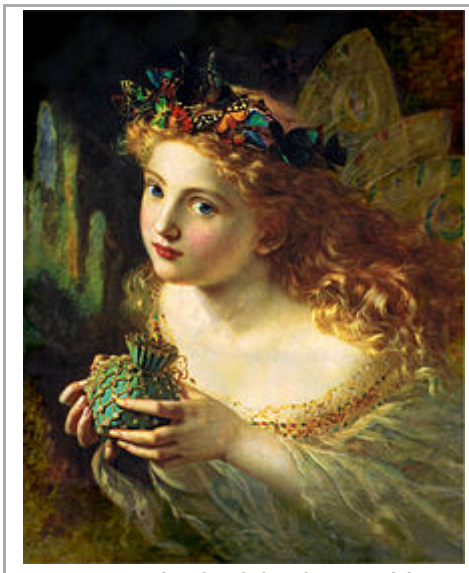
Myths and stories about fairies do not have a single origin, but are rather a collection of folk beliefs from disparate sources. Various folk theories about the origins of fairies include casting them as either demoted angels or demons in a Christian tradition, as minor deities in pre-Christian Pagan belief systems, as spirits of the dead, as prehistoric precursors to humans, or as elementals.

The label of *fairy* has at times applied only to specific magical creatures with human appearance, small stature, magical powers, and a penchant for trickery. At other times it has been used to describe any magical creature, such as goblins and gnomes. *Fairy* has at times been used as an adjective, with a meaning equivalent to "enchanted" or "magical".

A recurring motif of legends about fairies is the need to ward off fairies using protective charms. Common examples of such charms include church bells, wearing clothing inside out, four-leaf clover, and food. Fairies were also sometimes thought to haunt specific locations, and to lead travelers astray using will-o'-the-wisps. Before the advent of modern medicine, fairies were often blamed for sickness, particularly tuberculosis and birth deformities.

In addition to their folkloric origins, fairies were a common feature of Renaissance literature and Romantic art, and were especially popular in the United Kingdom during the Victorian and Edwardian eras. The Celtic Revival also saw fairies established as a canonical part of Celtic cultural heritage.

Fairy



A portrait of a fairy, by Sophie Gengembre Anderson (1869). The title of the painting is *Take the Fair Face of Woman, and Gently Suspending, With Butterflies, Flowers, and Jewels Attending, Thus Your Fairy is Made of Most Beautiful Things* – purportedly from a poem by Charles Ede.

Grouping	Legendary creature Pixie Sprite Tuatha Dé Danann
Region	Europe

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Etymology

The English *fairy* derives from Old French form *faierie*, a derivation from *faie* (from Vulgar Latin *fata*) with the abstract noun suffix *-erie*. In Old French romance, a *faie* or *fee* was a woman skilled in magic, and who knew the power and virtue of words, of stones, and of herbs.[2]

"Fairy" was used to represent: an illusion or enchantment; the land of the Faes; collectively the inhabitants thereof; an individual such as a fairy knight.[2] *Faie* became Modern English *fay*, while *faierie* became *fairy*, but this spelling almost exclusively refers to one individual (the same meaning as *fay*). In the sense of "land where fairies dwell", archaic spellings *faery* and *faerie* are still in use.

Latinate *fay* is not related the (Germanic) *fey*, meaning "fated to die";[3] but some dictionaries do list "fey" as a kind of fairy.[4]

Various folklore traditions refer to fairies euphemistically as *wee folk*, *good folk*, *people of peace*, *fair folk* (Welsh: *Tylwyth Teg*), etc.[5]

Historical development

The term *fairy* is sometimes used to describe any magical creature, including goblins and gnomes, while at other times, the term describes only a specific type of ethereal creature or sprite.[6] The concept of "fairy" in the narrower sense is unique to English folklore, later made diminutive in accordance with prevailing tastes of the Victorian era, as in "fairy tales" for children.

Historical origins include various traditions of Celtics (Bretons, Welsh people), Gaelics (Irish, Scots), Germanic peoples, and of Middle French medieval romances. *Fairie* was used adjectivally, meaning "enchanted" (as in *fairie knight, fairie queene*), but also became a generic term for various "enchanted" creatures during the Late Middle English period. Literature of the Elizabethan era conflated elves with the fairies of Romance culture, rendering these terms somewhat interchangeable.

The Victorian era and Edwardian era saw a heightened increase of interest in fairies. The Celtic Revival cast fairies as part of Ireland's cultural heritage. Carole Silvers and others suggested this fascination of English antiquarians arose from a reaction to greate industrialization and loss of older folk ways.[7]

Descriptions

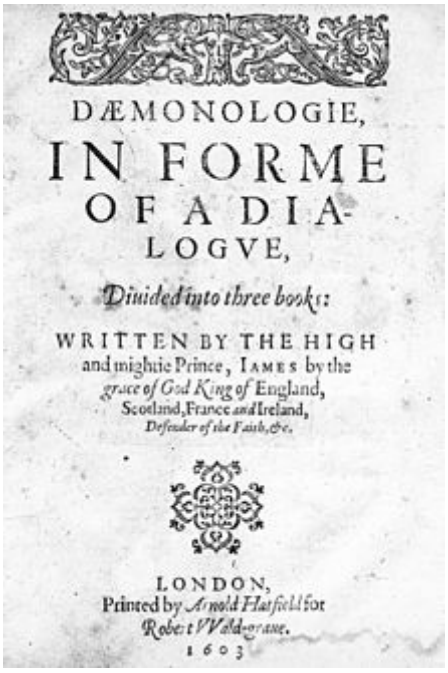
Fairies are generally described as human in appearance and having magical powers. Diminutive fairies of various kinds have been reported through centuries, ranging from quite tiny to the size of a human child.[8] These small sizes could be magically assumed, rather than constant.[9] Some smaller fairies could expand their figures to imitate humans.[10] On Orkney, fairies were described as short in stature, dressed in dark grey, sometimes seen in armour.[11] In some folklore, fairies have green eyes. Some depictions of fairies show them with footwear, others as barefoot. Wings, while common in Victorian and later artworks, are rare in folklore; fairies flew by means of magic, sometimes perched on ragwort stems or the backs of birds.[12] Modern illustrations often include dragonfly or butterfly wings.[13]

Origins

Early modern *fairies* does not derive from a single origin; the term is a conflation of disparate elements from folk belief sources, influenced by literature and speculation. In folklore of Ireland, the mythic *aes sídhe*, or 'little folk', have come to a modern meaning somewhat inclusive of fairies. The Scandinavian elves also served as an influence. Folklorists and mythologists have variously depicted fairies as: the unworthy dead, the children of Eve, a kind of demon, a species independent of humans, an older race of humans, and fallen angels.[14] The folkloristic or mythological elements combine Celtic, Germanic and Greco-Roman elements. Folklorists have suggested that 'fairies' arose from various earlier beliefs, which lost currency with the advent of Christianity.[15] These disparate explanations are not necessarily incompatible, as 'fairies' may be traced to multiple sources.

Christian mythology

King James, in his dissertation *Daemonologie*, stated the term "faries" referred to illusory spirits (demonic entities) that prophesied to, consorted with, and transported the individuals they served; in medieval times, a witch or sorcerer who had a compact with a familiar spirit might receive these services.[16]


DÆMONOLOGIE,
IN FORME
OF A DIA-
LOGVE,
Diuided into three bookes:
WRITTEN BY THE HIGH
and mightie Prince, IAMES by the
grace of God King of England,
Scotland, France and Ireland,
Defender of the Faith, &c.
LONDON,
Printed by Arnold Hatfield for
Robert Waldegrave.
1603

Title page of a 1603 reprinting of *Daemonologie*

Demoted angels

A Christian tenet held that fairies were a class of "demoted" angels.[17] One story described a group of angels revolting, and God ordering the gates of heaven shut; those still in heaven remained angels, those in hell became demons, and those caught in between became fairies.[18] Others wrote that some angels, not being godly enough, yet not evil enough for hell, were thrown out of heaven.[19] This concept may explain the tradition of paying a "teind" or tithe to hell; as fallen angels, although not quite devils, they could be viewed as subjects of Satan.[20]

In England's Theosophist circles of the 19th century, a belief in the "angelic" nature of fairies was reported.[21] Entities referred to as Devas were said to guide many processes of nature, such as evolution of organisms, growth of plants, etc., many of which resided inside the Sun (Solar Angels). The more Earthbound Devas included *nature spirits*, *elementals*, and *fairies*,[22] which were described as appearing in the form of colored flames, roughly the size of a human.[23]

Arthur Conan Doyle, in his *The Coming of the Fairies*; *The Theosophic View of Fairies*, reported that eminent theosophist E. L. Gardner had likened fairies to butterflies, whose function was to provide an essential link between the energy of the sun and the plants of Earth, describing them as having no clean-cut shape ... small, hazy, and somewhat luminous clouds of colour with a brighter spark-like nucleus. "That growth of a plant which we regard as the customary and inevitable result of associating the three factors of sun, seed, and soil would never take place if the fairy builders were absent."[24]

For a similar concept in Persian mythology see Peri.

Demoted pagan deities

At one time it was thought that fairies were originally worshiped as minor deities, such as nymphs and tree spirits,[25] and with the burgeoning predominance of the Christian Church, reverence for these deities carried on, but in a dwindling state of perceived power. Many deprecated deities of older folklore and myth were repurposed as fairies in Victorian fiction (See the works of W. B. Yeats for examples).

Fairies as demons

A recorded Christian belief of the 17th century cast all fairies as demons.[26] This perspective grew more popular with the rise of Puritanism among the Reformed Church of England (See: Anglicanism).[27] The hobgoblin, once a friendly household spirit, became classed as wicked goblin.[28] Dealing with fairies was considered a form of witchcraft, and punished as such.[29] In William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Oberon, king of the faeries, states that neither he nor his court fear the church bells, which the renowned author and Christian apologist C. S. Lewis cast as a politic disassociation from faeries.[30] In an era of intellectual and religious upheaval, some Victorian reappraisals of mythology cast deities in general as metaphors for natural events,[31] which was later refuted by other authors (See: *The Triumph of the Moon*, by Ronald Hutton). This contentious environment of thought contributed to the modern meaning of 'fairies'.

Spirits of the dead

One belief held that fairies were spirits of the dead [32]. This derived from many factors in common of various folklore and myths: same or similar tales of both ghosts and fairies; the Irish *sídhe*, origin of their term for fairies, were ancient burial mounds; deemed dangerous to eat food in Fairyland and Hades; the dead and fairies depicted as living underground.[33] Diane Purkiss observed an equating of fairies with the untimely dead who left "unfinished lives".[34] One tale recounted a man caught by the fairies, who found that whenever he looked steadily at a fairy, it appeared as a dead neighbor of his.[35] This theory was among the more common traditions related, although many informants also expressed doubts.[36]

A hidden people

There is a theory that fairy folklore evolved from folk memories of a prehistoric race: newcomers superseded a body of earlier human or humanoid peoples, and the memories of this defeated race developed into modern conceptions of fairies. Proponents find support in the tradition of cold iron as a charm against fairies, viewed as a cultural memory of invaders with iron weapons displacing peoples who had just stone, bone, wood, etc., at their disposal, and were easily defeated. 19th-century archaeologists uncovered underground rooms in the Orkney islands that resembled the Elfland described in Childe Rowland,[37] which lent additional support. In folklore, flint arrowheads from the Stone Age were attributed to the fairies as "elf-shot",[38] while their green clothing and underground homes spoke to a need for camouflage and covert shelter from hostile humans, their magic a necessary skill for combating those with superior weaponry. In a Victorian tenet of evolution, mythic cannibalism among ogres was attributed to memories of more savage races, practising alongside "superior" races of more refined sensibilities.[39]

1896 illustration of a fairy fromErnest Vincent Wright's *The Wonderful Fairies of the Sun*

Elementals

A theory that fairies, et al., were intelligent species, distinct from humans and angels.[40] An alchemist, Paracelsus, classed gnomes and sylphs as elementals, meaning magical entities who personify a particular force of nature, and exert powers over these forces.[41] Folklore accounts have described fairies as "spirits of the air".[42]

Characteristics

Much folklore of fairies involves methods of protecting oneself from their malice, by means such as cold iron, charms (see amulet, talisman) of rowan trees or various herbs, or simply shunning locations "known" to be theirs, ergo avoiding offending any fairies.[43] Less harmful pranks ascribed to fairies include: tangling the hair of sleepers into fairy-locks (aka elf-locks), stealing small items, and leading a traveler astray. More dangerous behaviors were also attributed to fairies; any form of sudden death might have stemmed from a fairy kidnapping, the evident corpse a magical replica of wood.[44] Consumption (tuberculosis) was sometimes blamed on fairies who forced young men and women to dance atevels every night, causing them to waste away for lack of rest.[45] Rowan trees were considered sacred to fairies,[46] and a charm tree to protect one's home.[47]

Classifications

In Scottish folklore, fairies are divided into the *Seelie Court* (more beneficently inclined, but still dangerous), and the *Unseelie Court* (more malicious). While fairies of the Seelie Court enjoyed playing generally harmless pranks on humans, those of the Unseelie Court often brought harm to humans for entertainment.[38]

Trooping fairies refers to those who appear in groups and might form settlements, as opposed to solitary fairies, who do not live or associate with others of their kind. In this context, the term *fairy* is usually held in a wider sense, including various similar beings, such as dwarves and elves of Germanic folklore.[48]

Classic representation of a small fairy with butterfly wings commonly used in modern times. Luis Ricardo Falero, 1888.

Changelings

A considerable amount of lore about fairies revolves around changelings, fairy children left in the place of stolen human babies.[7] In particular, folklore describes how to prevent the fairies from stealing babies and substituting changelings, and abducting older people as well.[49] The theme of the swapped child is common in medieval literature and reflects concern over infants thought to be afflicted with unexplained diseases, disorders, or developmental disabilities. In pre-industrial Europe, a peasant family's subsistence frequently depended upon the productive labor of each member, and a person who was a permanent drain on the family's scarce resources could pose a threat to the survival of the entire family.[50]

Protective charms

In terms of protective charms, wearing clothing inside out,[51] church bells, St. John's wort, and four-leaf clovers are regarded as effective. In Newfoundland folklore, the most popular type of fairy protection is bread, varying from stale bread to hard tack or a slice of fresh home-made bread. Bread is associated with the home and the hearth, as well as with industry and the taming of nature, and as such, seems to be disliked by some types of fairies. On the other hand, in much of the Celtic folklore, baked goods are a traditional offering to the folk, as are cream and butter.[21] "The prototype of food, and therefore a symbol of life, bread was one of the commonest protections against fairies. Before going out into a fairy-haunted place, it was customary to put a piece of dry bread in one's pocket."[52] In County Wexford, Ireland, in 1882, it was reported that "if an infant is carried out after dark a piece of bread is wrapped in its bib or dress, and this protects it from any witchcraft or evil."[53]

Bells also have an ambiguous role; while they protect against fairies, the fairies riding on horseback — such as the fairy queen — often have bells on their harness. This may be a distinguishing trait between the Seelie Court from the Unseelie Court, such that fairies use them to protect themselves from more wicked members of their race.[54] Another ambiguous piece of folklore revolves about poultry: a cock's crow drove away fairies, but other tales recount fairies keeping poultry.[55]

While many fairies will confuse travelers on the path, the will o' the wisp can be avoided by not following it. Certain locations, known to be haunts of fairies, are to be avoided; C. S. Lewis reported hearing of a cottage more feared for its reported fairies than its reported ghost.[56] In particular, digging in fairy hills was unwise. Paths that the fairies travel are also wise to avoid. Home-owners have knocked corners from houses because the corner blocked the fairy path,[57] and cottages have been built with the front and back doors in line, so that the owners could, in need, leave them both open and let the fairies troop through all night.[58] Locations such as fairy forts were left undisturbed; even cutting brush on fairy forts was reputed to be the death of those who performed the act.[59] Fairy trees, such as thorn trees, were dangerous to chop down; one such tree was left alone in Scotland, though it prevented a road being widened for seventy years.[60]

Other actions were believed to offend fairies. Brownies were known to be driven off by being given clothing, though some folktales recounted that they were offended by inferior quality of the garments given, and others merely stated it, some even recounting that the brownie was delighted with the gift and left with it.[61] Other brownies left households or farms because they heard a complaint, or a compliment.[62] People who saw the fairies were advised not to look closely, because they resented infringements on their privacy.[63] The need to not offend them could lead to problems: one farmer found that fairies threshed his corn, but the threshing continued after all his corn was gone, and he concluded that they were stealing from his neighbors, leaving him the choice between offending them, dangerous in itself, and profiting by the theft.[64]

A resin statue of a fairy

Millers were thought by the Scots to be "no canny", owing to their ability to control the forces of nature, such as fire in the kiln, water in the burn, and for being able to set machinery a-whirring. Superstitious communities sometimes believed that the miller must be in league with the fairies. In Scotland, fairies were often mischievous and to be feared. No one dared to set foot in the mill or kiln at night, as it was known that the fairies brought their corn to be milled after dark. So long as the locals believed this, the miller could sleep secure in the knowledge that his stores were not being robbed. John Fraser, the miller of Whitehill, claimed to have hidden and watched the fairies trying unsuccessfully to work the mill. He said he decided to come out of hiding and help them, upon which one of the fairy women gave him a *gowpen* (double handful of meal) and told him to put it in his empty *girnal* (store), saying that the store would remain full for a long time, no matter how much he took out.[65]

It is also believed that to know the name of a particular fairy could summon it to you and force it to do your bidding. The name could be used as an insult towards the fairy in question, but it could also rather contradictorily be used to grant powers and gifts to the user

Before the advent of modern medicine, many physiological conditions were untreatable and when children were born with abnormalities, it was common to blame the fairies.[66]

Legends

Sometimes fairies are described as assuming the guise of an animal.[67] In Scotland it was peculiar to the fairy women to assume the shape of deer; while witches became mice, hares, cats, gulls, or black sheep. In "The Legend of Knocksheogowna", in order to frighten a farmer who pastured his herd on fairy ground, a fairy queen took on the appearance of a great horse, with the wings of an eagle, and a tail like a dragon, hissing loud and spitting fire. Then she would change into a little man lame of a leg, with a bull's head, and a lambent flame playing round it.[68]

In the 19th-century child ballad "Lady Isabel and the Elf-Knight", the elf-knight is a Bluebeard figure, and Isabel must trick and kill him to preserve her life.[69] Child ballad "Tam Lin" reveals that the title character, though living among the fairies and having fairy powers, was in fact an "earthly knight" and though his life was pleasant *now*, he feared that the fairies would pay him as their teind (tithe) to hell.[69]

"Sir Orfeo" tells how Sir Orfeo's wife was kidnapped by the King of Faerie and only by trickery and excellent harping ability was he able to win her back. "Sir Degare" narrates the tale of a woman overcome by her fairy lover, who in later versions of the story is unmasked as a mortal. "Thomas the Rhymer" shows Thomas escaping with less difficulty, but he spends seven years in Elfland.[70] Oisín is harmed not by his stay in Faerie but by his return; when he dismounts, the three centuries that have passed catch up with him reducing him to an aged man.[71] King Herla (O.E. *"Herla cyning"*), originally a guise of Woden but later Christianised as a king in a tale by Walter Map, was said, by Map, to have visited a dwarf's underground mansion and returned three centuries later; although only some of his men crumbled to dust on dismounting, Herla and his men who did not dismount were trapped on horseback, this being one account of the origin of the Wild Hunt of European folklore.[72][73]

A common feature of the fairies is the use of magic to disguise appearance. *Fairy gold* is notoriously unreliable, appearing as gold when paid but soon thereafter revealing itself to be leaves, gorse blossoms, gingerbread cakes, or a variety of other comparatively worthless things.[74]

These illusions are also implicit in the tales of *fairy ointment*. Many tales from Northern Europe[75][76] tell of a mortal woman summoned to attend a fairy birth — sometimes attending a mortal, kidnapped woman's childbed. Invariably, the woman is given something for the child's eyes, usually an ointment; through mischance, or sometimes curiosity, she uses it on one or both of her own eyes. At that point, she sees where she is; one midwife realizes that she was not attending a great lady in a fine house but her own runaway maid-servant in a wretched cave. She escapes without making her ability known but sooner or later betrays that she can see the fairies. She is invariably blinded in that eye or in both if she used the ointment on both.[77]

There have been claims by people in the past, like William Blake, to have seen fairy funerals. Allan Cunningham in his *Lives of Eminent British Painters* records that William Blake claimed to have seen a fairy funeral. "'Did you ever see a fairy's funeral, madam?' said Blake to a lady who happened to sit next to him. 'Never, sir!' said the lady. 'I have,' said Blake, 'but not before last night.' And he went on to tell how, in his garden, he had seen 'a procession of creatures of the size and colour of green and grey grasshoppers, bearing a body laid out on a rose-leaf, which they buried with songs, and then disappeared." They are believed to be an omen of death.

Tuatha Dé Danann

The Tuath(a) Dé Danann are a race of supernaturally-gifted people in Irish mythology. They are thought to represent the main deities of pre-Christian Gaelic Ireland. Many of the Irish tales of the Tuatha Dé Danann refer to these beings as fairies, though in more ancient times they were regarded as goddesses and gods. The Tuatha Dé Danann were spoken of as having come from islands in the north of the world or, in other sources, from the sky. After being defeated in a series of battles with other otherworldly beings, and then by the ancestors of the current Irish people, they were said to have withdrawn to the *sídhe* (fairy mounds), where they lived on in popular imagination as "fairies."

They are associated with several Otherworld realms including *Mag Mell* (the Pleasant Plain), *Emain Ablach* (the Fortress of Apples or the Land of Promise or the Isle of Women), and *Tir na nÓg* (the Land of Youth).

Aos Sí

The ***aos sí*** is the Irish term for a supernatural race in Irish and Scottish, comparable to the fairies or elves. They are variously said to be ancestors, the spirits of nature, or goddesses and gods.[78] A common theme found among the Celtic nations describes a race of diminutive people who had been driven into hiding by invading humans. In old Celtic fairy lore the *Aos Sí* (fairy folk) are immortals living in the ancient barrows and cairns. The Irish banshee (Irish Gaelic *bean sí* or Scottish Gaelic *bean shìth*, which both mean "woman of the fairy mound") is sometimes described as a ghost.[79]

In the 1691 *The Secret Commonwealth of Elves, Fauns and Fairies*, Reverend Robert Kirk, minister of the Parish of Aberfoyle, Stirling, Scotland, wrote:

> These Siths or Fairies they call Sleagh Maith or the Good People...are said to be of middle nature between Man and Angel, as were Daemons thought to be of old; of intelligent fluidous Spirits, and light changeable bodies (lyke those called Astral) somewhat of the nature of a condensed cloud, and best seen in twilight. These bodies be so pliable through the sublety of Spirits that agitate them, that they can make them appear or disappear at pleasure[80]

In literature

The word "fairy" was used to describe an individual inhabitant of Faerie before the time of Chaucer.[2]

Fairies appeared in medieval romances as one of the beings that a knight errant might encounter. A fairy lady appeared to Sir Launfal and demanded his love; like the fairy bride of ordinary folklore, she imposed a prohibition on him that in time he violated. Sir Orfeo's wife was carried off by the King of Faerie. Huon of Bordeaux is aided by King Oberon.[81] These fairy characters dwindled in number as the medieval era progressed; the figures became wizards and enchantresses.[82]

"Prince Arthur and the Fairy Queen" by Johann Heinrich Füssli; scene from *The Faerie Queene*

The oldest fairies on record in England were first described by the historian Gervase of Tilbury in the 13th century.[83]

Morgan le Fay, whose connection to the realm of Faerie is implied in her name, in *Le Morte d'Arthur* is a woman whose magic powers stem from study.[84] While somewhat diminished with time, fairies never completely vanished from the tradition. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is a late tale, but the Green Knight himself is an otherworldly being.[82] Edmund Spenser featured fairies in *The Faerie Queene*.[85] In many works of fiction, fairies are freely mixed with the nymphs and satyrs of classical tradition,[86] while in others (e.g., Lamia), they were seen as displacing the Classical beings. 15th-century poet and monk John Lydgate wrote that King Arthur was crowned in "the land of the fairy" and taken in his death by four fairy queens, to Avalon, where he lies under a "fairy hill", until he is needed again.[87]

The Quarrel of Oberon and Titania by Noel Paton: fairies in Shakespeare

Fairies appear as significant characters in William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which is set simultaneously in the woodland and in the realm of Fairyland, under the light of the moon[88] and in which a disturbance of nature caused by a fairy dispute creates tension underlying the plot and informing the actions of the characters. According to Maurice Hunt, Chair of the English Department at Baylor University, the blurring of the identities of fantasy and reality makes possible “that pleasing, narcotic dreaminess associated with the fairies of the play”.[89]

Shakespeare's contemporary Michael Drayton features fairies in his *Nimphidia*; from these stem Alexander Pope's sylphs of *The Rape of the Lock*, and in the mid-17th century, *précieuses* took up the oral tradition of such tales to write fairy tales; Madame d'Aulnoy invented the term *contes de fée* ("fairy tale").[90] While the tales told by the *précieuses* included many fairies, they were less common in other countries' tales; indeed, the Brothers Grimm included fairies in their first edition but decided this was not authentically German and altered the language in later editions, changing each *Fee* ("fairy") to an enchantress or wise woman.[91] J. R. R. Tolkien described these tales as taking place in the land of Faerie.[92] Additionally, not all folktales that feature fairies are generally categorized as fairy tales.

The modern depiction of fairies was shaped in the literature of Romanticism during the Victorian era. Writers such as Walter Scott and James Hogg were inspired by folklore which featured fairies, such as the *Border ballads*. This era saw an increase in the popularity of collecting of fairy folklore and an increase in the creation of original works with fairy characters.[93] In Rudyard Kipling's *Puck of Pook's Hill*, Puck holds to scorn the moralizing fairies of other Victorian works.[94] The period also saw a revival of older themes in fantasy literature, such as C.S. Lewis's Narnia books, which, while featuring many such classical beings as fauns and dryads, mingles them freely with hags, giants, and other creatures of the folkloric fairy tradition.[95] Victorian flower fairies were popularized in part by Queen Mary's keen interest in fairy art and by British illustrator and poet Cicely Mary Barker's series of eight

books published in 1923 through 1948. Imagery of fairies in literature became prettier and smaller as time progressed.[96] Andrew Lang, complaining of "the fairies of polyanthuses and gardenias and apple blossoms" in the introduction to *The Lilac Fairy Book*, observed that "These fairies try to be funny and fail; or they try to preach, and succeed.[97]

A story of the origin of fairies appears in a chapter about Peter Pan in J. M. Barrie's 1902 novel *The Little White Bird*, and was incorporated into his later works about the character. Barrie wrote, "When the first baby laughed for the first time, his laugh broke into a million pieces, and they all went skipping about. That was the beginning of fairies."[98] Fairies are seen in Neverland, in *Peter and Wendy*, the novel version of J. M. Barrie's famous Peter Pan stories, published in 1911, and its character Tinker Bell has become a pop culture icon. When Peter Pan is guarding Wendy from pirates, the story says, "After a time he fell asleep, and some unsteady fairies had to climb over him on their way home from an orgy. Any of the other boys obstructing the fairy path at night they would have mischiefed, but they just tweaked Peter's nose and passed on.[99]

In art

Images of fairies have appeared as illustrations, often in books of fairy tales, as well as in photographic-based media and sculpture. Some artists known for their depictions of fairies include Cicely Mary Barker, Arthur Rackham, Brian Froud, Alan Lee, Amy Brown, David Delamare, Meredith Dillman, Jasmine Becket-Griffith, Warwick Goble, Kylie InGold, Ida Rentoul Outhwaite, Myrea Pettit, Florence Harrison, Suza Scalora,[100] Nene Thomas, Gustave Doré, Rebecca Guay and Greta James.

At that moment she was changed by magic to a wonderful little elf by John Bauer

The Fairy Doors of Ann Arbor, MI are small doors installed into local buildings. Local children believe these are the front doors of fairy houses, and in some cases, small furniture, dishes, and various other things can be seen beyond the doors.

The Victorian era was particularly noted for fairy paintings. The Victorian painter Richard Dadd created paintings of fairy-folk with a sinister and malign tone. Other Victorian artists who depicted fairies include John Atkinson Grimshaw, Joseph Noel Paton, John Anster Fitzgerald and Daniel Maclise.[101] Interest in fairy-themed art enjoyed a brief renaissance following the publication of the Cottingley Fairies photographs in 1917 and a number of artists turned to painting fairy themes.

See also

- Fairies portal

General

- Donas de fuera - The Fairy witch trials of Sicily
- Fairy godmother
- Fairy Investigation Society
- Fairy ring
- Spriggan
- Tooth fairy
- Yakshini
- Yōsei

Popular culture

- Artemis Fowl (series)
- *The Chronicles of Prydain* (book series)
- *Disney Fairies*

- List of fairy and sprite characters
- *Lost Girl*
- *Supernatural* (U.S. TV series)
- The Fairly OddParents (TV – cartoon)
- *Rainbow Magic*
- The Spiderwick Chronicles (book series)
- True Blood (TV series)
- *Winx Club*
- The Dresden Files (book series)

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- Audio recording of a Scandinavian folktale explaining fairy origins (streaming and downloadable formats)
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